

HEALTH ACT OF 2011

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the legislation we'll vote on shortly to repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board created under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. This is something that simply should not have been done. These are unelected board members, 15 of them, appointed by the President, tasked for finding savings and making recommendations.

Unfortunately, because of the limitations of what the board can cut, the majority of spending reductions will come from cutting reimbursements for doctors and those who care for Medicare patients. The ultimate result will be fewer options for patients when doctors are driven out of the Medicare system.

We were told when the Affordable Care Act was passed that it would lead to a reduction in premiums. It's done exactly the opposite.

This kind of board and these kinds of decisions made by unelected officials will simply drive the cost up further, and we cannot afford to do that.

My only regret in today's action is that we're not repealing the entire act. I hope that comes soon.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, today I rise to speak of the need to protect the health care of American women.

Last week, I hosted a women's conference focused on the benefit of the Affordable Care Act for women. The historic health care reform is a step in the right direction for the health of mothers, sisters, daughters, and granddaughters.

Thanks to affordable health care, women can no longer be dropped from insurance coverage when they get sick or become pregnant. Twenty million women have already used free preventive services offered through health care reform, including mammograms and colonoscopies.

Beginning in 2014, women will no longer be denied coverage for having a preexisting condition. The health care law finally ends gender rating, in which women are forced to pay higher premiums than men for the same coverage.

American women are the foundation of our families. We must protect the benefit of health care reform and ensure that all women have better access to health care.

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THE NATIONAL DEBT

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Madam Speaker, our national debt now exceeds \$15.5 trillion. I think it's fair to say that Washington has a spending problem. Republicans and Democrats alike have overspent over the years.

In the past 4 years, Washington has spent over \$5 trillion of taxpayer money that we don't have. The degree of how much this actually means to the American public, I think, is incomprehensible. Most people that I talk to just say that's a heck of a lot of money. I talk about the deficit of \$1.5 trillion that we spent this last year and they say I just think it's a lot of money. It works out to be about \$3.4 million a minute in deficit spending.

But if we take eight zeros off these numbers, to put it in perspective for the American family, I think it gives them a good idea about what their budget would look like. The annual family income would be about \$22,280. The money the family would spend in a given year would be \$37,080. New debt on the credit card would be \$14,800. The outstanding balance, which I think is important, is \$155,000, and the total discretionary budget cuts that were put in for 2011 for this family, \$398.

Madam Speaker, that's what we're facing. We must pass a budget that takes the step necessary to rein in the out-of-control spending that our country has today and put ourselves on a path to economic prosperity. We have no other choice.

THE ADVANCES FOR WOMEN IN HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Madam Speaker, tomorrow marks the second anniversary of the landmark health care reform bill being signed into law by President Obama.

Many of the important reforms under the new law benefit women, who for years have faced discriminatory practices by insurance companies and borne higher health care costs simply as a result of their gender.

Because of the new law, women can no longer be denied coverage or charged more for such preexisting conditions as breast or cervical cancer, pregnancy, or, of all things, being a victim of domestic abuse.

Women no longer have to share the cost of critical and potentially lifesaving preventive services such as mammograms and colonoscopies.

These reforms for women not only make care more equitable, but they also help to reduce the cost of care by insuring that many diseases are detected early or prevented before their onset through vaccinations and regular screenings.

While additional reforms will be implemented in stages, many advances, as a result of health care reform, are al-

ready making a difference in the lives of women across this country.

JOEL SHRUM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, on Sunday in the Yemeni city of Tah-izz, al Qaeda terrorists viciously gunned down American Joel Shrum.

Joel grew up in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in Mount Joy and was a football star at Donegal High School.

He leaves behind a wife and two young sons who lived with him in Yemen.

Joel worked as a teacher at the International Training Development Center, which focused on giving vocational training to the poor.

Joel was a Christian, but he was not in the country to proselytize. According to his father, Joel was there to teach and break down barriers. The organization he worked for is staffed by both Christians and Muslims and has worked in the country for over 40 years.

The people of Yemen are appalled at this violence. Hundreds of activists took to the streets yesterday to demand justice for the killers. They carried photos of Joel and chanted: "Yemen is not a place for terrorism" and "We love you, Joel."

Joel Shrum selflessly served the poor in a country far from home. He will be dearly missed by his family and by the people he came to serve.

CHARLES DARWIN WOULD BLUSH

(Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, yesterday by one vote the Republican Budget Committee passed a fend-for-yourself budget that gives Darwinism a bad name. It breaks a bipartisan compromise not even a year old. It voucherizes Medicare, in effect jeopardizing health care for tens of millions of American seniors. It essentially guts Medicaid and jeopardizes nursing home care for millions more. It block-grants the safety net programs led by food stamps, threatening to reverse decades-old progress in lowering poverty and malnutrition rates in America.

This is a budget that needs to be rejected, Madam Speaker. It is a budget that would make Charles Darwin blush.

IT'S UNCONSTITUTIONAL

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the nationalized health care bill will soon go before the Supreme Court.